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LIVESTOCK AND MEAT
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WORLD CATTLE NUMBERS UP

World cattle numbers continued to rise during last year and set a new high of 1,153 million head at the beginning of 1968. However, the annual rate of growth shows signs of slowing down. The percentage increase over the previous year was less than 1 percent compared to 1.4 percent for 1967 and 2.8 percent for 1966. A further increase in cattle numbers is expected to occur during 1968 but the percentage rise will probably be slightly less than that for the past year.

The increase in beef cattle numbers more than offsets the continuing downward trend in dairy cattle. This is occurring in most of the developed countries in the world. Many of these countries have incentive programs for increasing beef cattle production where the demand continues to expand. Also, many of the developing nations have beef cattle development programs and projects underway as part of their over-all economic development plan to increase foreign exchange earnings through exporting more beef to the highly developed nations of the world.

Cattle and buffalo: Estimated world numbers
by continent and area, average 1961-65, annual 1966-68

Continent and area	Average	1966	1967	1968	Percent change	
	1961-65				1968	1968
					1961-65	1967
	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	Percent	Percent
	head	head	head	head		
North America.....	149,400	157,800	158,500	158,700	+6.2	+0.1
South America.....	168,200	185,800	187,700	190,600	+13.3	+1.5
Europe:						
Western.....	83,400	86,000	87,400	87,400	+4.8	---
Eastern.....	33,000	34,100	35,200	36,000	+9.1	+2.3
Total Europe.....	116,400	120,100	122,600	123,400	+6.0	+ .7
USSR.....	83,500	93,400	97,100	97,100	+16.3	---
Africa.....	127,400	132,300	133,500	134,000	+5.2	+ .4
Asia.....	395,500	414,400	418,800	422,400	+6.8	+ .9
Oceania.....	25,300	25,400	26,300	27,000	+6.7	+2.7
Total world.....	1,065,700	1,129,200	1,144,500	1,153,200	+8.2	+ .8

Cattle and buffalo: Number in specified countries,
average 1961-65, annual 1966-68

Continent and country	Month of enumeration 1/	Average 1961-65	1966	1967 2/	1968 2/
		Thousand	Thousand	Thousand	Thousand
North America:					
Canada.....	Dec. 1	11,257	11,643	11,749	11,775
United States 3/.....	Jan. 1	103,892	103,862	103,645	103,813
Puerto Rico.....	Jan.	428	438	---	---
Costa Rica.....	Jan.	1,138	1,294	1,387	1,430
El Salvador.....	Oct.	919	922	923	---
Guatemala.....	Spring	1,245	1,323	1,300	1,340
Honduras.....	Dec.	1,255	1,316	1,380	1,450
Mexico.....	Spring	20,396	23,294	---	23,627
Nicaragua.....	Dec. 31	1,495	1,570	1,600	1,630
Panama.....	Jan.	859	1,011	---	---
Total North America 4/.....		149,400	157,800	158,500	158,700
South America:					
Argentina.....	June 30	42,983	---	---	---
Brazil.....	Dec. 31	78,715	90,594	90,244	91,093
Chile.....	Dec.	2,914	2,370	3,097	3,100
Colombia.....	Oct.	15,780	17,073	17,932	18,830
Ecuador.....	Aug.	1,680	1,770	1,800	1,830
Paraguay.....		5,349	5,461	5,575	---
Peru.....	July 1	3,461	3,650	3,700	---
Uruguay.....	June 30	8,526	8,400	8,300	---
Venezuela.....	Dec. 31	6,510	6,735	6,822	6,911
Total South America 4/.....		168,200	185,300	187,700	190,600
Europe:					
Western:					
EEC:					
Belgium.....	Dec.	2,572	2,619	2,597	2,610
France.....	Oct.	20,020	20,640	21,184	21,417
Germany, West.....	Dec.	13,115	13,680	13,973	13,981
Italy 5/.....	Jan.	9,292	9,600	9,700	9,750
Netherlands.....	Dec.	3,336	3,549	3,633	3,683
Luxembourg.....	May	159	171	173	---
Total EEC.....		48,494	50,259	51,260	51,596
Austria.....	Dec.	2,355	2,441	2,497	2,450
Denmark.....	Jan.	3,318	3,266	3,231	3,142
Finland.....	Dec.	1,951	1,855	1,895	1,855
Greece 5/.....	Dec.	1,138	1,175	1,138	1,142
Ireland.....	Jan.	4,320	4,946	5,150	5,020
Norway.....	Dec.	1,094	1,011	996	969
Portugal.....	Dec.	1,120	1,050	1,050	1,060
Spain.....		3,697	3,712	3,757	---
Sweden.....	Oct.	2,497	2,411	2,336	2,291
Switzerland.....		1,764	1,795	1,835	1,830
United Kingdom.....	Dec.	11,610	11,995	12,171	12,018
Total Western Europe 4/.....		83,400	86,000	87,400	87,400
Eastern:					
Albania 5/.....		419	---	---	---
Bulgaria 5/.....	Jan.	1,687	1,577	---	---
Czechoslovakia.....	Jan. 1	4,466	4,389	4,462	---
Germany, East.....	Dec. 3	4,605	4,762	4,918	---
Hungary 5/.....	Mar.	1,941	1,974	---	---
Poland.....	June 30	9,697	10,391	10,763	---
Romania 5/.....	Jan.	4,639	4,935	5,196	---
Yugoslavia 5/.....	Jan. 15	5,509	5,643	5,770	---
Total Eastern Europe 4/.....		33,000	34,100	35,200	36,000
Total Europe 4/.....		116,400	120,100	122,600	123,400
USSR.....		83,500	93,400	97,100	97,100

(Continued)

Cattle and buffalo: Number in specified countries,
average 1961-65, annual 1966-68

(Continued)

Continent and country	Month of enumeration 1/	Average 1961-65	1966	1967 2/	1968 2/
		Thousand	Thousand	Thousand	Thousand
Africa:					
Morocco.....		2,745	2,600	2,550	---
Tunisia.....	Dec. 31	558	---	---	---
United Arab Republic.....	Jan. 1	3,213	3,280	---	---
Kenya.....		7,256	---	---	---
Malawi.....	Dec. 31	384	425	---	---
Mali.....		4,329	---	---	---
Mozambique.....	Dec. 31	1,124	1,134	---	---
Rhodesia.....	Dec. 31	3,710	---	---	---
Tanzania.....	Dec. 31	8,550	10,000	---	---
Uganda 6/.....		3,485	3,627	---	---
Zambia.....	Dec. 31	1,259	1,302	---	---
Botswana.....		1,293	---	---	---
South Africa, Republic of.....	June 30	12,514	12,184	11,920	12,145
Swaziland.....	Sept.	533	491	---	---
Total Africa 4/.....		127,400	132,300	133,500	134,000
Asia:					
Iran 5/.....	Mar. 1	4,782	5,430	5,640	5,750
Syrian Arab Republic 5/.....	Dec. 31	358	387	---	---
Turkey 5/.....	Dec. 31	13,783	14,419	15,022	15,175
Vietnam, North 5/.....	Oct. 1	2,303	---	---	---
Cambodia 5/.....	Dec.	1,842	2,344	2,500	---
Ceylon 5/.....	Dec.	2,434	---	---	---
China, Taiwan 5/.....	Dec.	405	377	367	---
Japan.....	Feb. 1	3,327	2,887	2,928	3,050
Korea, South.....	Dec. 31	1,218	1,321	1,299	---
Philippines 5/.....	Mar. 1	4,849	5,459	5,620	5,805
Thailand 5/.....	Mar. 31	12,200	---	---	---
Vietnam, South 5/.....	Dec. 31	1,938	1,834	---	---
Total Asia 4/.....		395,500	414,400	418,800	422,400
Oceania:					
Australia.....	Mar.	18,357	17,936	18,250	18,500
New Zealand.....	Jan.	6,648	7,218	7,767	8,200
Total Oceania 4/.....		25,300	25,400	26,300	27,000
Total World 4/.....		1,065,700	1,129,200	1,144,500	1,153,200

1/ Official estimates for countries falling in October-December are shown in the following year for comparisons. 2/ Preliminary. 3/ 50 States. 4/ Includes an allowance for missing data for countries shown and for other producing countries not shown. 5/ Includes buffalo. 6/ On native farms.

Foreign Agricultural Service. Prepared or estimated on the basis of official statistics of foreign governments, other foreign source material, reports of the United States Agricultural Attaches and Foreign Service Officers, results of office research and related information.

Cattle numbers increased in all geographic regions last year. The largest percentage gains were recorded for Oceania, Eastern Europe, and South America. The percentage increases in North America, Africa, and Asia were under 1 per cent. Western Europe and the USSR showed no changes from the previous year.

North America. All countries in this region showed gains from the previous year. The largest percentage increases occurred in Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Since these countries are free from foot-and-mouth disease, they are eligible to export fresh and frozen beef to the United States.

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Cattle numbers on farms and ranches in the United States on January 1, 1968 totaled 108.8 million head--up slightly from the 108.6 million for 1967, but still below the 1965 high of 109.0 million. The 1 percent increase in beef cattle numbers more than offsets the 3 percent decline in dairy cattle. Dairy cattle numbers have now declined for 14 consecutive years. In Canada, the increase in beef cows also more than offsets the decline in dairy cow numbers. However, dairy stock in Mexico is increasing faster than beef cattle numbers.

South America. Cattle numbers continued to increase in this area and totaled 190.6 million head in early 1968, compared with 187.7 million in 1967. All countries recorded gains, except Uruguay. The decline in this country was attributed to the abnormally high death losses in the beef herd caused by floods, freezing weather during calving and the shortage of range feed. The severe floods in Venezuela reduced somewhat the normal rate of increase while numbers in Paraguay have not fully recovered from losses sustained during the floods of 1966. Further growth in beef cattle numbers is expected in South America as some countries continued their national and international development programs for expanding beef production.

Western Europe. There was no significant change in cattle numbers from last year. The only countries showing gains from the previous year included the members of EEC, Greece, Portugal, and Spain. The declines recorded for Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Austria, and Switzerland were caused by the continuing downward trends in dairy cow numbers. Heavy slaughter reduced numbers on farms in Ireland and was an important factor in Denmark. The decline in the United Kingdom was caused by losses sustained from the foot-and-mouth epidemic which removed about the equivalent of one year's natural increase in numbers. The gains in Greece, Spain, and Portugal were in dairy cattle resulting from national and international development programs.

Cattle numbers in EEC rose to 51.6 million head from 51.3 million for 1967. Most of the increase occurred in France. The number of breeding cows, both beef and dairy, continued to increase as EEC strives to improve its self-sufficiency in beef production under a single market which is now scheduled to become effective June 1, 1968.

Eastern Europe. Cattle numbers on farms in this area showed an increase of 2.4 percent from 1967. All countries recorded gains with Poland and Romania accounting for most of the increase. Cattle numbers in the USSR showed no change from the previous year. However, the number of breeding cows was up slightly from the previous year.

Africa. Numbers in this area were estimated at 134.0 million head, or slightly above the estimated figure of 133.5 million for 1967. Numbers in the Republic of South Africa rose to 12.1 million head from 11.9 million for 1967. Disease problems and the inability to establish export markets for beef have slowed down the build up in cattle numbers in Africa.

Asia. Cattle numbers in this area were estimated at 422.4 million head, compared with 416.5 million for 1967. Numbers in Japan rose to 3.1 million head from 2.9 million in 1967. The number of dairy cattle in Japan continued to rise, and the downward trend in beef cattle was reversed in 1967. The reversal in beef cattle numbers was attributed to the Japanese Government's various programs to increase beef production. Other countries in this area showing increases from 1967 included Iran, Turkey, and the Philippines.

Oceania. Cattle numbers in this area at the beginning of 1968 showed the largest percentage increase in the world. Numbers increased from 26.3 million head in 1967 to 27.0 million for 1968, or a net gain of 2.6 percent. Australia accounted for about 35 percent of the absolute increase and New Zealand for the remaining 65 percent. Both of these two countries still have a large potential for further increases in cattle numbers.